



THE SCHOOL DISTRICT OF PHILADELPHIA

October 25, 2019

Dear Members of the Thomas M. Peirce Elementary School Community:

The safety of students and staff remains a top priority of the School District of Philadelphia. As you are likely aware, the School District's Office of Environmental Management and Services (OEMS) has received reports regarding possible damaged asbestos containing materials at the T.M. Peirce School.

On October 24, 2019, staff from OEMS visited Peirce to inspect the items noted in the Philadelphia Federation of Teacher's (PFT) report. Our inspection concluded the following:

1. There is no damaged asbestos containing materials in the gymnasium. Because the gym is a student-teacher occupied area, our office is recommending that as a proactive measure the pipe insulation be removed. The timing of abatement activities must be coordinated with the Principal and staff to ensure alternate arrangements can be made for physical education classes.
2. Asbestos containing pipe insulation was observed throughout the basement, in the hallways, lunchrooms, and gyms. **Our inspection noted damage in basement hallway next to the oven. Abatement of this insulation will begin this evening while the building is unoccupied.**
3. There is pipe insulation in the basement that is not sealed at the ends. The pipe insulation is not considered to be damaged, however, as a precaution, these open ends will be sealed this weekend.
4. The pipe insulation in the basement has been repaired and painted several times over the years. Paint is flaking from sections of the insulation, and water staining was observed in areas as well. Paint stabilization is currently underway on the upper floors of the building, and plastic sheeting are in place in the basement as a protective measure until stabilization activities begin in the basement.

Although Peirce is inspected twice per year for damaged asbestos as mandated by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, the School District is implementing an expedited and upgraded approach at Peirce in light of the recent information about damaged materials in the building.

The School District of Philadelphia's Office of Environmental Management Services developed a plan and has hired licensed, external inspectors to:

- Look for and uncover asbestos-containing materials in the Peirce school building. This will include collecting and sampling materials that are assumed to contain asbestos and not previously tested.
- Conduct an Indoor Environmental Quality evaluation to identify other issues such as moisture intrusion, ventilation issues, pest control, and asthma triggers.
- Continue completing repairs as identified in the lead paint assessment conducted on July 1, 2019 through July 19, 2019. Repairs to address peeling and flaking lead paint began in the building on September 16, 2019 and are expected to be complete by December 6, 2019.

- Review outstanding maintenance work orders to prioritize any additional repairs.

These inspections are anticipated to take ten days. Following the completion of the inspections, the team will schedule a meeting with the Principal, Teacher representatives, PFT's Environmental Director, and parent representatives to review the results and jointly develop next steps for repairs and remediation. The results of all environmental inspections and testing will be shared with the Peirce community and posted on the School District's website.

I am also happy to share that the approved FY2020 capital budget includes funding to build a new building for T.M. Peirce. This investment will provide students and staff with a modern learning environment aligned to 21st century instructional practices and skills. Staff from the Office of Capital Programs will be in touch with Principal Gordon when this project is ready to begin.

We appreciate your understanding, patience, and flexibility. A staff member from OEMS will be on-site at Peirce during admission on Monday, Oct. 28 to answer any questions families may have.

Sincerely,

Danielle Floyd
Chief Operating Officer

Cc: Anthony Gordon, Principal
Amelia Coleman-Brown, Learning Network Eleven Assistant Superintendent